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Elbow Surgery Post Operative Instructions

General:

- **Ice! Ice! Ice!** To the surgical elbow to prevent swelling. Use ice 20 minutes on/ 20 minutes off diligently for 3-4 days, then as needed. If you have a Cold Therapy pad, make sure it does not touch the skin directly. Use a light towel under the pad. If you have a splint, apply the ice directly over the splint.
- If you had a block, your arm and hand may be numb after the operation. Usually this wears off by 24 hours. Contact us if this persists longer than 48 hours.
- If you are given white compression stockings (TED Hose), please wear them until the first post-op visit.
- You will be in a sling. Keep the underarm **CLEAN** and **DRY** to prevent a rash by using a pad or clean dry washcloth.
- Breathing exercises: cough and deep breathe for one minute, every hour, for 2-3 days.
- If you are experiencing any of the following call our office or the provider on-call immediately:
 - Fever greater than 101 degrees F, chills
 - Excessive redness, swelling or drainage from incisions
 - Calf pain or tenderness

Medications: (ALWAYS TAKE WITH FOOD!!)

- You will be discharged with a prescription for pain medicine. Let us know in advance if you are running out. **REFILLS ARE NOT HANDLED ON THE WEEKEND!**
- You may use Tylenol as needed for milder pain instead of the prescribed medication, or you may supplement the prescribed medicine with ibuprofen 600mg every 6 hours.
- Pain medications can be constipating. You may use over-the-counter laxative or stool softener (Colace, Metamucil, Milk of Magnesia, etc.) as needed until your bowel function returns to normal.
- Take a Baby Aspirin (81mg) daily until seen in the office to help prevent blood clots from forming in your legs.
- May resume pre-op medications (or) Other: _____

Wound Care: The procedure you had or the length of the incision will determine how to care for the wound, see checked item below:

- 48 hours after surgery, you may change the dressings and shower as needed. **DO NOT REMOVE ADHESIVE STRIPS OVER THE WOUNDS.** No ointments or lotions! No baths or hot tubs!
- Keep splint/dressing on and **DRY** until 1st post-op visit. Do not remove. You may wrap in sealed plastic as to not get the dressing wet when you shower 3 days after surgery.

Sling: *Depending on the procedure that was performed, you should:*

- ❑ Use sling as needed, may discontinue after 48 hours.
- ❑ Use at all times. Do not remove.
- ❑ You may remove the wrist strap and move your wrist and elbow.

Follow-up Appointment:

- Please make sure your post-op appointment is made for 7-10 days after surgery! If not, please call the office to schedule.

Please call if you have any problems questions or concerns! If you need to reach us during business hours, please call the office at **(303)321-1333** and leave a message, we will return your call. If you need to reach us after-hours or on the weekend, page Andrew, Dr. Traina's PA, and he will return your call. His pager number is **(303)201-4713**.